

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method, comprising:
  - preview scanning a document and generating a preview scan image;
  - determining a document type based on the preview scan image;
  - 5 mapping the document type to a predetermined workflow;
  - scanning the document to capture an image of the document; and
  - executing the workflow.
2. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein determining a document type comprises:
  - generating a region signature of a predetermined portion of the preview scan image;
  - comparing the region signature with known region signatures;
  - determining a match with a known region signature; and
  - 15 determining the predetermined workflow in response to the matched region signature.
3. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein determining a document type comprises:
  - generating a region signature of a predetermined portion of the preview scan image, the region signature including size and location of the predetermined portion, relative and absolute distribution, and percentage of text and image;
  - comparing the region signature with stored region signatures;
  - determining a match with at least one stored region signature; and
  - 25 determining the predetermined workflow in response to the matched region signature.

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4. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein determining a document type comprises:

generating a region signature of the preview scan image;

comparing the region signature with learned region signatures of previous scan

5 tasks;

determining a match with a learned region signature; and

determining the predetermined workflow in response to the matched region signature.

10 5. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein determining a document type comprises:

generating a region signature of the preview scan image;

comparing the region signature with stored template region signatures of certain common document types;

15 determining a match with a stored template region signature; and

determining the predetermined workflow in response to the matched region signature.

20 6. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein executing the workflow comprises:

determining at least one post-scan application for manipulating the scanned image;

automatically launching the at least one post-scan application; and

processing the scanned image.

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7. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein executing the workflow comprises:

determining at least one post-scan application for manipulating the scanned image;

5 displaying the selection of the at least one post-scan application to solicit user input;

automatically launching the at least one post-scan application; and  
processing the scanned image.

10 8. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein executing the workflow comprises automatically launching a word processing application in response to the region signature being matched to a region signature of a text-centric document.

15 9. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein executing the workflow comprises automatically launching an image editing application in response to the region signature being matched to a region signature of a graphic-centric document.

10. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein executing the workflow comprises automatically launching a facsimile application in response to the region 20 signature being matched to a region signature of a facsimile cover sheet.

11. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein executing the workflow comprises automatically launching a photo editing application in response to the region signature being matched to a region signature of a photograph.

25 12. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein executing the workflow comprises automatically storing the scanned image in a predetermined format in a predetermined folder in response to the region signature being matched to a region signature of a photograph.

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13. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein executing the workflow comprises automatically storing the scanned image in an extensible markup language (XML) format in response to the region signature being matched to a region signature of a mixture of text and graphics.

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14. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein executing the workflow comprises automatically storing the scanned image in a portable document format (.pdf) in response to the region signature being matched to a region signature of a photograph.

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15. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein executing the workflow comprises automatically storing the scanned image in a database file in response to the region signature being matched to a region signature of a particular format.

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16. The method, as set forth in claim 1, wherein executing the workflow comprises automatically launching a web page editing application.

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17. A system, comprising:  
a digital image capture device operable to capture images;  
a scanning module operable to preview scan a document and generate a preview scan image; and  
an automated scan workflow module operable to determine a document type based on the preview scan image, map the document type to a predetermined workflow, and executing the workflow.

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18. The system, as set forth in claim 17, wherein the digital image capture device is a device selected from the group consisting of a scanner, a copier, a camera, a facsimile device, a digital sender, a multipurpose device, and a multifunction device.

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19. The system, as set forth in claim 17, wherein the automated scan workflow module is operable to generate a region signature of a predetermined portion of the preview scan image, compare the region signature with known region signatures, determine a match with a known region signature, and determine the predetermined workflow in response to the matched region signature.

20. The system, as set forth in claim 17, wherein the automated scan workflow module is operable to determine at least one post-scan application for manipulating the scanned image, and automatically launching the at least one post-scan application.

21. A scanner, comprising:  
a scanning module operable to preview scan a document and generate a preview scan image; and  
an automated scan workflow module operable to determine a document type based on the preview scan image, map the document type to a predetermined workflow, and executing the workflow.

22. The scanner, as set forth in claim 21, wherein the automated scan workflow module is operable to generate a region signature of a predetermined portion of the preview scan image, compare the region signature with known region signatures, determine a match with a known region signature, and determine the predetermined workflow in response to the matched region signature.

23. The scanner, as set forth in claim 21, wherein the automated scan workflow module is operable to determine at least one post-scan application for manipulating the scanned image, and automatically launching the at least one post-scan application.